

Columbus Meet Cements Makers and Pros in Common Aim

INITIAL BUSINESS conference of the Professional Golfers' Association, held at Columbus, June 23 and 24, resolved itself into a series of spirited, informal discussions tending to bring professionals, manufacturers and players into better understanding of their mutual problems. Direct outcome of the conference probably will be a session of a P. G. A. committee and one from the club and ball makers' associations with the idea of working on unwarranted price cutting disturbances, defects in distribution, and other common matters of timely concern.

Honorary President Alex Pirie did a deft job of steering the opening session. Pirie told the assemblage to shed coats and get into action. The response was one of the frankest freehand discussions of pro-manufacturer relations that any golf business meeting has heard. Pirie, A. R. Gates, Willie Klein, Alex Ayton, Grange Alves, Ed. Newkirk and George Bowden presented the pro views. Batting for the manufacturers were Ed Conlin, Col. Mercer, Jim Ewell, and Horton Smith. Spirited exposés and explanations of frailties on both sides were brought forward. After both sides had said their pieces it was found that a happy and mutually profitable platform was not unobtainable.

Outstanding among the conclusions reached was that the knowing, established manufacturers fully acknowledge the part that pro plays in making and controlling the golf market. That pro business was by far the more desirable sector of the golf market came out, not as a pleasing thought dictated by the circumstances of the meeting, but as a cold-blooded decision arrived at after due deliberation.

For years, professionals have listened to loving words publicly said by club officials in which high tribute was paid to pro sportsmanship and service to the game—but all that has gone before ran second to the remarks made at the pro conference by Freeman Eagleson, noted corporation counsel. Eagleson confessed that he had obtained an altogether new idea of the pro business during the Columbus session and advised the pros to make a practice of

taking up their problems with their club officials. Officials, he said, would give the pros a lot of help if they knew what help the pros needed. The Columbus lawyer said that the pros deserved the golf market for their work in building it as well as because of their strategic merchandising location. He condemned distribution of good supplies through misfit retail outlets and related from his corporation experience that this practice would cost the manufacturers dearly.

Horton Smith, making his debut as a pro business speaker, registers a pronounced success. Smith, so the pros believe, is slated for a great career in the business side of the game. He advised the pros to take inventory of their players' equipment and from this data determine their immediate market. His address is printed elsewhere in this issue.

Jim Ewell, advertising manager for Wilson Western, gave the pros the low-down on some of the manufacturers' problems. He pointed out that the pros have no special cause for complaint as their business is in much better shape than almost any other commercial line in these hectic days. Ewell's excellent talk on pro publicity will appear in an early issue of GOLFDOM.

Charles Hall, president of the professional group, opened the second session by telling of the difficulties the pros had experienced in getting official audiences with the manufacturers' association. Mercer and Conlin told the makers' side and assured the pros that mishaps in this connection were not to reoccur. Hall briefly mentioned the pro association plan to inaugurate training schools for professionals on the order of the football coach sessions.

In speaking of the necessity for definitely planned education of the assistants, Ed Conlin brought out the United States Rubber company survey finding that assistants make approximately 10 million dollars annually of the shop sales. He spoke of careful selection of raw material in the assistant ranks and detailed a training plan that would make the boys more profitable to their employers.

Letters from the credit managers of several of the leading golf companies read at the meeting testified that the pro business status had so tremendously improved during the last few years that pros now rank as first rate small retailing operators from the credit viewpoint. The manufacturers presented a prayer that the pros would make more of a habit of putting whatever complaints they had in letters, thus allowing the manufacturers an opportunity to straighten out any misunderstandings.

Pros reminded the manufacturers that the pro difficulties in collecting from their members were not given enough consideration. The pro can't get tough in collecting or he is fired. Pirie, in thanking the manufacturers for their interest in the pros, commented that pro help was not primarily a matter of love for the human race but a right smart idea for assuring the manufacturers a good profit from a substantial and growing market.

Col. Mercer, president of the Vulcan Golf corporation, in speaking of pro competition expressed the opinion that the pros' greatest competition is the pro. He set forth a summary of pro business policies that offset the activities of pro competitors. In the near future his address will appear in these columns.

Course Income Squares Tax Loss, Mayor Notes

IN A hearing before the New York Board of Estimate at which purchase of the Clearview G. & Y. C. 18-hole plant, houses and pier at a cost of \$940,000 was approved, Mayor Walker set forth a point for municipal courses.

To those who protested at the price paid for the play property, the New York mayor pointed out that operation as a public golf course would bring to the city a revenue of between \$40,000 and \$50,000 which might more than compensate for the removal of the property from the tax rolls.

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Two New Books Discuss Jones' History, Swing

Down the Fairway—By Robert T. Jones, Jr., and O. B. Keeler. Blue Ribbon edition. \$1.

THIS TALE of the Jones performances has been a big seller in a more expensive edition and now with the price cut to a dollar ought to make a clean sweep of the golf nut trade. It's the classic of athletic biographies. The ex-Emperor and his shadow have provided a bargain in golf literary entertainment. They're selling these dollar books at almost as many places as you can get cut-price golf balls, so spend your buck for the Jones book instead of contributing it to the ball gyps.

The Golf Swing of Bobby Jones—By Kell Greene. Thomas S. Rockwell Co. 50 cents.

A LONG LEAN guy from Jawja has taken the chubby champ from Atlanta apart to see what made him tick. He's done a workmanlike and thorough job of this, and now the hell of it is for the reader to put the parts together again. There's a lot of good stuff in Greene's book and some debatable interpretation of cause and effect—or the other way around. Anyhow, this expenditure of a half dollar will not mar the record of the Hoover administration and undoubtedly will help some clowns iron the rough spots out of their antics on tee and fairway.

Medic Finds Club Grips Can Transport Skin Itch

CONSIDERABLE press publicity has been given to the warning recently issued by Dr. Charles F. Pabst, chief dermatologist of the Greenpoint Hospital of Brooklyn, N. Y., that leather handles of golf clubs used by others may harbor *fungus dermatitis*, that annoying skin eruption which is becoming increasingly common around clubs. "Gym itch," "golfer's itch" and "athlete's foot" are three popular names for this misery.

Danger of picking up the disease, Dr. Pabst points out, is mainly at public golf courses, where sets of clubs are frequently rented. Research workers at North-

Golfers who use clubs handled by others, says the doctor, should scrub their hands thoroughly as soon as possible after the game. Better yet, wear thin cotton gloves.